



## Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative

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Early Care & Education Work Group – March 18, 2005	
Members Present: Donna Alliston, Patti Bokony, Judy Clay, Jana Gifford, Dana Gonzales, David Griffin, Deniece Honeycutt, Sherri McLemore, Martha Reeder, Sandra Reifeiss, Vicki Shelby, Vicki Stearns, Ratha Tracy, Mary Ann Williams.	
Agenda Item #1	
<p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <p>Martha Reeder gave a synopsis of the <i>Strengthening Families Initiative</i> (SFI) retreat at Petit Jean Mountain. The strategy of SFI is to involve early childhood settings in working with families to build protective factors around children (for 5 PFs, see right column). The Arkansas SFI has three primary objectives to be accomplished during the next two years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>? Develop a cadre of “promising practice programs” that will be supported in order to increase their capacity to strengthen families, and out of this network to identify four “exemplary” programs where SFI principles are being fully supported, resulting in four regional hubs for training and replication.</li> <li>? Plan and implement a statewide “kick-off” event that will begin to get the work about the SFI.</li> </ul>	<p>(continued from previous column )</p> <p><u>The Five Protective Factors:</u></p> <p><b>For Adults:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>? Parental resilience</li> <li>? An array of social connections</li> <li>? Adequate knowledge of parenting and child development</li> <li>? Concrete support in times of need</li> </ul> <p><b>For Children:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>? Healthy social and emotional development</li> </ul> <p>The Steering Committee of the AECCS agreed to house/manage sub-groups from SFI under the work groups of AECCS. The “exemplary” and “promising practice programs” sub-group will be housed/managed through the Early Care &amp; Ed Work Group. This will allow us to avoid the problem of scheduling extra meetings, and also will take advantage of the good work that is already being done in this</p>

<b>Agenda Item #2: Promising Practice Program Invitation to statewide SFI Kick-Off</b>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b> A worksheet from the SFI retreat was shared with the group. It delineated some of the criteria for who should be invited to apply for the "Promising Practice Programs" network. This worksheet will be attached to the minutes.</p> <p>Kathy Stegall shared a draft copy of an invitation letter that will be mailed to the 100+ programs that meet baseline criteria. Said letter would invite these programs to attend the statewide SFI "kick-off" event, in order to learn more about the program. The group made some suggested revisions to the letter. They also suggested that when the letter is mailed out, that a draft copy of the agenda for the event should be included.</p>	<p><b>Result:</b></p> <p>Kathy agreed to make suggested revisions and prepare letter to be sent out by April 1. Revised letter is also attached to these minutes.</p>
<b>Agenda Item #3: "Promising Practice Programs" application to become "Exemplary Program"</b>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b> It was decided that at the statewide kick-off event at the AETN studios in Conway on May 24, that the application should be distributed to all attendees who have expressed an interest in applying to be "Exemplary Programs." The application will be mailed out to those unable to attend, but still interested.</p>	<p><b>Results:</b></p> <p>The group developed a list of questions to be referred to a small group. This small group will develop the application, and a resulting scoring sheet. Members of this group are: Deniece Honeycutt, Patti Bokony, Vicki Mathews, Rosemary White, Kathy Stegall and Martha Reeder.</p>
<b>Agenda Item #4: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for "Exemplary Programs"</b>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b> An MOU that states the benefits TO participating programs, and the obligations that SFI has TO the programs is to be drawn up and</p>	<p><b>Results:</b> A small group was identified that would work on formulating the MOU. Members of this group are:</p>

Agenda Item #5: Wrap Up

**Discussion:** All work group members made a commitment to attend the statewide SFI kick-off event. It is currently scheduled for May 24, 2005 at the AETN Studios in Conway, Arkansas. Events will begin at approximately 4:00 p.m. with an orientation to SFI. (All details of the agenda have not yet been worked out – final agenda and invitation will be issued after Parent Ed groups meets on April 4). This will be followed by a reception at 5:00 p.m. From 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m., all participants will be involved in a re-airing of the child abuse and neglect prevention (30 minute) special that AETN has produced for the Arkansas Parent Education Network Convention. This will be augmented by audience discussion and the participation of “expert” panels.

**Result:** No further meetings of the Early Care & Ed work group were scheduled pending the completion of the SFI kick-off event. Committee chairs Sandra Reifeiss and Vicki Shelby will notify the group of next meeting.

Committee co-chairs will also be in touch with the work group with regard to feedback on the application and the MOU, after those groups have met and have a product to share.

Martha shared that Dr. Deborah Smith from the University of Missouri/Kansas City will be visiting Little Rock on April 22. She will be sharing information about the Family Development Credential at a 1:00 p.m. meeting that day. More information on this meeting will be mailed out to all AECCS work group members after a meeting place is secured. The Family Development Credential is a credential for frontline workers that is designed to reorient human service practice to the family support approach. It offers a research-based, comprehensive curriculum in family support principles, which significantly improves the ability of frontline workers to help the families and individuals they work with to set and reach their own goals. After successful completion of 90 classroom hours of instruction, a standardized exam, and portfolio development under the guidance of a community-based Field Advisor